Mario, Pauline, and Donkey Kong in: The Great Ape Escape!
Chapter 1: Jumpman vs. Society

“Breaking News: New York’s favorite gorilla, Donkey Kong, has escaped from his pen at the Bronx Zoo. If you see a 7 foot, 10 inch tall, 800 pound gorilla wearing a stylish, bright red necktie with the printed initials ‘D.K.’, please call 9-1-1 immediately.”

Mario nearly choked on his pepperoni slice as he overheard the newscast on the dusty, ancient CRT television that rested on the counter of Mona’s Pizza. His blind date, Danielle “Pauline” Verducci, looked at him askance. Wearing her daring red dress and pearls, along with her designer purse and kino sun hat, she was wildly out of place amongst the crowd of construction workers and wrecking crew members who made up Mona’s regular customers. “I fail to see what’s so humorous. A wild gorilla in New York? The poor thing must be so frightened!”

Remembering his mama mia’s lessons on manners, Mario tried to daintily wipe away an oil stain from his mustache with a brown napkin. “Well, it’s just that specific bit about the necktie. How many other gorillas do they think are rampaging through the Bronx?”

Pauline nibbled the tip of her pizza, before staring at the stock footage of the world-famous gorilla with a far-off look in her eye. “Oh, there’s no mistaking that magnificent, noble gorilla. I got to talk to him during the grand opening ceremony for the exhibit. Daddy’s on the board of members, you see. If you ask me, it’s not fair, keeping gorillas in cages. They have feelings too! Why shouldn’t Donkey Kong be allowed roam free? He’s a person too!”

“But…he’s a gorilla?”

“Exactly! You know, I’m convinced that pitiable creature understood me, more than any regular person ever could. Gorillas are such intelligent animals. They can learn sign language! I think I saw that on a Jane Goodall documentary, once.”

Mario resisted the urge to argue, opting instead for tact. “Well, I hope the big lug gets home safe.”

“He’s not a big lug! He’s a sweet, sensitive soul! I’m always right about these things. Daddy says I’m an excellent judge of character, when I make the effort!”

Mario side-eyed the TV, which now depicted the sweet, sensitive, soulful Donkey Kong ripping iron bars out concrete with his bare hands. “When I called him a big lug, I meant it affectionately. So, Miss Verducci, what do you like to do, when you’re not at grand openings and ribbon cutting ceremonies?”

“Oh, you know. Charity balls. Broadway. The New York Stock Exchange. There’s always so much to do! What about yourself, Mr. Mario? What do you do when you’re not working in carpentry?”

Mario beamed. “Well, it’s usually a 10-hour shift on the construction site, then Luigi and I burn the midnight oil on the plumbing coursework for vocational school. Once we get our apprenticeship, the sky’s the limit!”

“Ah…you want to be a plumber?”

Stars appeared in Mario’s eyes. “You bet I do! Plumbers can always get work, even in this lousy economy! And once I become a journeyman, I can finally make enough to take care of Mom and Dad, and start a family of my own! Heck, if President Reagan can just get this stagflation under control, I might be able to save up enough to buy a home! I’m *this* close to living the American dream! God bless America!” As the star-spangled banner played over the television, Mario pulled off his red cap, and stood at attention. Now, Mario, the pint-sized, patriotic, potential plumber, was nearly at eye-level with Pauline, the scowling, spoiled, still-seated socialite.

Pauline didn’t react. “How nice. Well, this date has been…most memorable, Mister Mario. But I really should be getting home. Thank you for the pizza.”

Mario fixed his hat back on his head. “Oh? So soon? I was gonna’ take you to see a flick. I hear *Raiders of the Lost Ark* is–” Mario did a chef’s kiss, *“perfetto!”*

Mario hesitated when he noticed Pauline roll her eyes. “Sorry, daddy gets hot and bothered if I’m out late with a guy. He might *spank* me if I’m home late.” She said the word “spank” teasingly, as though daring Mario to comment on it.

Mario gently offered Pauline his arm as he followed her out Mona’s Pizza. “I see. Well, we wouldn’t want that. Let’s take a rain check on that movie, then. I’ll walk you home.”

Pauline grimaced, clutching her purse tight to avoid accepting Mario’s arm. “The thing is, I’m not sure this is going to work out.”

Mario’s mustache curled. “Was it something I said?”

Pauline brushed her radically curly, permed hair out of her eyes. “Oh, it’s not you, it’s me! You’re a really nice guy, but…I’m more into the Donald-Trump-types! You know: big hair, big suits…big red ties!”

Mario nodded. “I see. Well, let me walk you home anyway. Can’t be too careful in the Bronx these days.”

Pauline blushed as she caught sight of an elderly married couple, waving at them knowingly from the other side of the street. What if one of her friends spotted her like this? It would be all over the gossip rags by tomorrow morning: Daniella “Pauline” Verducci, caught arm-in-arm on a romantic stroll with a short, fat, carpenter-to-be-plumber in greasy overalls?

Pauline pulled down her sun hat, and fumbled to find her collapsible parasol in her purse. Anything to make her less recognizable to the paparazzi. “Really, you’d think the women’s rights movement never happened. It’s the 1980s. I don’t need a big strong man to do everything for me!”

Mario shrugged. “Well, I ain’t telling Mama I let a gal walk home alone in New York City. Once I get you home safe, I’ll be outta’ your hair. ”

Pauline stuck her nose in the air, not bothering to slow her pace as she powerwalked in her stiletto high heels. “I’m perfectly capable of walking home. It’s the middle of the afternoon, what do you think’s gonna’ happen?”

“Oh no! A 7 foot, 10 inch tall, 800 pound gorilla–wearing a stylish, bright red necktie with the printed initials ‘D.K’.–is attacking that fried banana stand! Someone call 9-1-1!” screamed a small child, with perfect comedic timing.

“My bananas!” wailed the banana merchant.

Three of the N.Y.P.D.’s finest officers dropped their donuts, and reached for their firearms. “Quick! Shoot that monster!”

Mario grabbed Pauline by the shoulders to lead her away from the danger, but she resisted him. “No! Don’t shoot Donkey Kong! He may look like a monster on the outside, but he’s really a gentle soul!” she wailed.

The second officer fumbled with his service revolver. “She’s right! Donkey Kong belongs at the Bronx Children’s Zoo! The children love him!”

Pauline threw her wrist against her forehead. “The children! Won’t someone please think of the children?” she whined.

The third officer bit her lip. “Well, maybe we wait to see if the gorilla attacks anyone first, and *then* shoot him?”

The first officer nodded. “Got it! If the monkey doesn’t attack anyone, then we shoot it!”

The second officer shook his head. “No, no, you got it all wrong! He ain’t a monkey! He’s a primeape!”

Mario tried to scoop Pauline up in his arms. “Stay back, Pauline! Let the professionals handle this!”

But Pauline squirmed free of his arms, then slapped Mario sharply across his face. “Unhand me, you brute! I don’t need you to rescue me! I’m a proud feminist! Oh, Donkey Kong? Yoo hoo! You poor, misunderstood creature, you!”

Donkey Kong took a bite of fried banana, then let it flop to the ground as his mouth hung open at the sight of a beautiful woman prancing towards him. It was her! The pretty, pretty lady from the zoo! The one with boobies the size of coconuts, and a booty as firm as a pair of bongo drums! He just *had* to have her!

Pauline giggled as she felt the gorilla scoop her up with his mighty hands. “Oh my! You silly boy. You’re so playful. Now, let’s get you home safe and–”

Donkey Kong held Pauline over his head triumphantly with one hand, beating his chest with his other hand. “Ook eee, oop Kong! Ook oooh!” [Translation: “Pretty lady belongs to Donkey Kong! Now Donkey Kong *marry* pretty lady, and give her banana!”]

Pauline’s eyes went wide. Her woman's intuition told her that Donkey Kong had not just announced his intention to return peacefully to the zoo. “Uh oh.”

With a roar, Donkey Kong leapt into a fenced-off construction site and began to scale the exposed, red steel beams, the skeleton of one of Donald Trump’s ongoing building projects. The officers continued to argue about the intricacies of gorilla taxonomy and the N.Y.P.D.’s policies and standards for use of force.

“Mama mia!” cried Mario, leaping up and over the fence in a single bound.

Pauline beat uselessly at the gorilla's unbreakable fist. “Eek! Help me Mario! …I mean, don’t you *dare* help me, Mario! I have the situation under control. Donkey Kong, you need to be nice to me! I know there’s good in you!”

Donkey Kong bellowed “Oopy oomf ook oop ooch! Kong oonkey tum tum bum bum oof oopy noo boomf!” [Translation: “Pretty wife talk too much! Donkey Kong will spank pretty wife’s butt, but good, if she don’t shut her trap!”]

Pauline nearly swooned, half from fear, half from the romance of it all. Her hat flew off her head, and her hair billowed in the wind. “See, Mario? I’m *reasoning* with him!”

“Woah, did you see that dude jump over that fence?” said an incredibly cool, 80s black guy.

“Totally tubular! That man can jump!” cheered his adorkable, asian, 80s punk-rock gal pal.

“Yeah! Jump, man, jump!”

Before anyone knew it, the entire crowd began to chant: “Jump! Man! Jump! Man!”

A homeless street performer began playing a simple, 5-note melody on his bass guitar, in time to the cheering.

Oblivious to the fact that he was becoming an American folk hero at that very moment, Mario scaled the steel beams with his bare hands, waving a gloved fist. “Put down the lady, you big palooka!”

25 meters above the crowd, Donkey Kong swung onto a platform lined with wooden barrels of metal rivets, left behind by the Popeye House-Builder-Uppers Construction Team. Pauline breathed a sigh of relief as she was set down, then screamed in terror, and clung to a vertical steel beam. It wasn’t that she was scared of the gorilla. She’d simply remembered that she was afraid of heights.

Donkey Kong beat his chest, flashing his teeth defiantly at the short, fat man who dared to challenge the King of the Kongs.*

[*Note: “Please don’t sue us, Universal Studios.” –Shigeru Miyamto]

With an evil grin, Donkey Kong scooped up two of the barrels and hurled them at Mario. The courageous carpenter dodged the first easily, but the second took him by surprise as it bounced and rolled toward him along the steel beam. Mario jumped over it, but it caught him by the boot. Losing his balance, Mario’s face slammed against metal, and he felt his body go weightless. His fingers grasped at air and caught the edge of the steel beam. Mario was an inch away from tumbling down to the concrete foundation, nearly seven stories below!

“No! Hang in there, Jumpman!” wailed the onlookers now crowding around the construction site. Mario saw Donkey Kong aim a third barrel directly at his fingers. There was no time to think! An instant before the barrel smashed into a flurry of wood and metal debris, Mario let go and snatched his trusty hammer from his carpenter’s belt. Swinging wildly, the claw of the hammer caught the rung of a metal ladder, and Mario scrambled up it. At the top of the ladder, he found he had reached Donkey Kong’s level.

Foaming at the mouth, the great ape snatched at the final barrel, and aimed it perfectly. It bounced once and rolled toward Mario on a direct collision course. Mario looked left and right. There was nowhere to jump! Then, the forthright cartwright spotted a sledge hammer hanging behind him. Wielding it with two hands, Mario slammed it on top of the deadly barrel. The rings burst and the rivets scattered like a storm of wasps. But Mario had survived.

Donkey Kong and Pauline were equally stunned. “...Nice!” whispered Pauline.

A gust of wind caught the hem of Pauline’s skirt, lifting it up to reveal her red panties, emblazoned with with the phrase “Daddy’s Little Girl” in white letters. Pauline squeaked and

held down her skirt, suddenly conscious of how ridiculous she looked. Who, oh why, had she chosen the red miniskirt dress today?

Not wanting to embarrass the poor girl further, Mario instinctively averted his gaze, just like his mama mia had taught him. Craftily, Donkey Kong seized his opportunity, and seized Pauline by the waist.

The ape spotted a crane lifting a steel beam in his peripheral vision and dove for it, holding Pauline by her booty above his head. “For shame! Don’t grab me there!” bawled Pauline.

To Pauline’s pleasant surprise, Donkey Kong set her down. Pauline raised a finger, planning to give the gorilla a proper telling off. “That’s more like it. Now, you listen here, buster! What you’re doing simply isn’t nice! You’re going to help me get down from here, right now, and we’re going straight back to–”

Then, Donkey Kong adjusted his grip, draping Pauline over his shoulder like a baby gorilla to free both his hands, and began to scale the steel cord. Realizing that she could slip off, Pauline clung to the gorilla’s hairy back for dear life. At the sight of the dizzying fall, every muscle in Pauline’s body went tight. It was at that precise moment that Pauline realized how very precious the gift of life was, and how very foolish she had been. *“Daddy was right! I can’t change a bad guy into a good guy, just because I want him to be good! This is all my fault!”* she thought, burying her head in shame. As her face pressed against the gorilla’s shoulder, Pauline nearly gagged at the scent of the stinking fur. At that moment, Pauline felt that whatever horrible fate befell her, she fully deserved it.

“Pauline! Hold on! I’m coming for ya!” boomed an angelic, Italian-American voice.

Craning her neck, Pauline spotted Mario, climbing up the same steel cable from below. “Mario? Help! Help! Oh, please, Mario, *save me!”*

Pauline stiffened as she saw the terrible ape grinning with wicked, intelligent delight, twisting the steel cable tight with both hands. “Mario! Watch out! The big lug is planning something!”

Pauline’s cry alerted Mario. Looking up, Mario realized what Donkey Kong was attempting a second before it was too late. “No! Don’t do it! You’ll kill–”

With one final lunge, Mario grasped at Donkey Kong’s foot, at the precise moment Donkey Kong snapped the steel cable in two with his bare hands. Unfortunately, Donkey Kong did not pay much attention to Newton’s Laws of Motion during physics class in Kong Kollege. When the steel cable disconnected from its load, the loose end sprang up with force like a whip, sending all three flying into the air.

The steel beam spiraled to the ground below, landing on a wooden plank, which sprang up like a lever, sending a barrel of oil sailing into the sky. The arm of the crane cracked, then the whole

vehicle went tumbling backwards. “Argh! Oh, my God!” roared the crane operator, a fat man with a bulbous pink nose, and a stupendous, kinky, black mustache.

Kicking the door open, the fat man tumbled out and onto the concrete foundation. “Wah! That was too close! Okay, that’s it, I quit! I don’t get paid enough for–” The fat man froze as he heard three voices screaming in terror above him. One sounded oddly familiar. The fat man scratched his nose, then dug a booger out of his nostril. “Wuh? That bird sounded a bit like cousin Mario. Whatta’ jerk!”

Scratching his butt, Wario Mario scooped up his lunch box (spicy curry and garlic bread, his favorite!) and stomped away.

Outside, a radio announcer was speaking urgently into his microphone in a clipped, New England accent. “Who is this mysterious Jump Man? Is this the end of Daniella Pauline Verducci, New York’s most eligible heiress, and world-renowned feminist? Will that bull-headed brute, Donkey Kong, have his way with her? We can only hope that the daring Jump Man may yet rescue the poor damsel in distress! Stay tuned, loyal listeners, to our on-the-spot coverage of the Great Ape Escape! Ow! Watch where you’re going, lardo!”

Wario knocked the reporter over as he elbowed his way through the crowd. “Ay! You watch where you’re standin’, chowder-head, I’m walkin’ here!”

[End of Chapter 1]

Mario, Pauline, and Donkey Kong in: The Great Ape Escape!
Chapter 2: Jumpman vs. Nature

50 meters above the gathering crowd, the flying oil barrel slammed against a button connected to a set of conveyor belts. The button was smashed into a mess of sparking wires and broken plastic, but not before activating the conveyor belt apparatus. Below, dozens of trays full of gold foil, which the young, rising business magnate Donald Trump had planned to decorate his magnificent new Trump Tower, were carried along the conveyor belts, before tumbling over the edge of the belt into nothingness. The oil barrel now looked like a mortally wounded animal, leaking black crude profusely. The oil dripped down and caught the end of a cigarette a construction worker had left for later, but had also forgotten to snuff out. The barrel rolled over the edge of the belt, landing neatly on top of a mesh of metal wire the construction team had placed to catch falling workers, then caught on fire. As globs of burning oil were sent flying in every direction, and started leaking out of the fiery barrel, they seemed to grin with wicked delight, like fireflies.

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Mario was lucky enough to smack against a ladder, knocking the wind out of him, but also saving him from hurtling to his doom. Donkey Kong and Pauline were even luckier: just as they peaked at the top of their flight, they landed on a long platform 20 meters above Mario, rolling over one another before coming to a graceful halt. A 10-point landing! Pauline clung tightly to Donkey Kong, before remembering she was furious at the brute. “Let me go! Shame on you!

Slapping Donkey Kong sharply across the face, Pauline stumbled to peek over the edge of the platform, and sighed with relief as she saw Mario wave at her, before realizing dozens of balls of fire were dropping from the flaming barrel of oil above him. Pauline beamed. With all her heart, she knew that such obstacles were trivialities to a man of Mario’s mettle!

Behind her, Donkey Kong rubbed his stinging cheek, steam billowing from his ears. The sight of Pauline’s perky, red-skirted apple-bottomed posterior made the King of the Kongs want to beat her buns like a pair of bongos. But the ape controlled his rage. In his gorilla language, he thought to himself, “No. Must resist urge to spank wife. Must be good father, for Donkey Kong Junior’s sake, and get good woman to be Mama Kong! First, get married, then spank wife.”

Pauline looked over her shoulder. Sensing that her backside was being inspected closely, she placed a hand over her bottom. Pauline now knew that she was hopelessly outmatched by the muscle-bound brute. Her feminist girl power could do nothing to save her. In her heart of hearts, Pauline knew that she *needed* Mario to save her, and believed with all her might that Mario surely *would* save her. But that didn’t mean she had to wait around and do nothing. Pauline smiled to herself. *“Being a stupid, selfish, spoiled little brat got me into this fix. But maybe being a cunning, selfish, spoiled little brat can get me out!”*

Pauline rolled her eyes and pouted. “Oh, Donkey Kong, really, you can’t take a girl out to a construction site on a first date. And where are we going to go once we reach the top? Really, if you had any brains, you’d help us both get back down, and get me a bouquet of flowers. Then we can discuss the future of this relationship like two adults.”

Pauline didn’t think the gorilla could understand her. She only hoped that he might understand the attitude behind her words, and decide she was too high-maintenance to be wife material. Or at least distract him long enough for Mario to arrive. However, Donkey Kong understood every word, having learned excellent English after many years of watching television with Donkey Kong Junior at the zoo.

“Ook roowee? Oop haka hoo? Kong wee wee!” [Translation: “Oh really? You mean it? Donkey Kong so happy!”]

Gently, Donkey Kong scooped Pauline up by the armpits and set her high on a narrow ledge. “Boo-koo oomf ook dum dum! Oomfie dooko ook, eek Kong tum tum bum bum!” [Translation: “But wife still in big trouble. Wife sit in time out, or Kong spank!”]

With no way down, Pauline clutched the ledge, pulling her knees tight against her chest. A chill traveled up her spine as she pressed her glutes tight against the cool steel.

Mario appeared at the edge of the ledge. Donkey Kong held his head low at the sight of his enemy, and began to drum the ground ominously. “Garoo, garook! Kong goo-roo foom foom!” [Translation: “Behold! The mighty Donkey Kong knows the secret of red flower!”]

Donkey Kong raised his arms, willing for the thunder gods in the sky to gift him with the power of fire, as they had once done for him on Kong Island when he called upon them, before the bad men with nets and cages came hunting for him and Junior.

Below them, the last drop from the depleted barrel of oil drizzled and fell to the floor below, landing on a single drum of oil, which had been left uncapped by mistake. With a mighty explosion, flames erupted into the sky, and a hunk of twisted metal landed directly between Donkey Kong and Mario. Startled, Mario halted his charge and fell back, rolling to put out the flames. Donkey Kong flashed all his teeth in a joyful smile. The fire gods had heard his prayer! *“That trick always work!”* thought Donkey Kong.

Spotting a ladder, Donkey Kong scurried up it. Pauline’s eyes went wide as Donkey Kong stretched to scoop her up off the ledge where she was serving her timeout, but there was nowhere to go. “Oh, dear! Please, don’t take me any higher! I have acrophobi-aaaaaaaaah!” Her purse slid off her smooth, bare shoulder.

Donkey Kong hummed as he felt the beautiful woman cling to his neck. Once he got to the top, the gods would hear his prayers, and bless his marriage to his new wife! Then he would rescue

Junior from the bad men, introduce Mama Kong to their son, and they would all escape together back to Kong Island, where they would live happily ever after!

The purse landed on Mario's arm as he struggled to put out the flames. Snatching it up, he slapped it against the oily droplets that clung to his red overalls and blue shirt, smothering the last few sparks. His mustache now slightly singed, Mario examined the lady's purse. The clasp broke, and a makeup kit and locket fell out. Feeling guilty, Mario started to collect the lady's things back in the purse, when he noticed a family photo in the locket. Engraved on the back were the words: "To Pauline: Spin the wheel, take a chance! Every journey starts a new romance! Love, Mommy and Daddy."

Mario put away the locket, determined to return the purse safely back to its owner, and deliver the owner safely back to her family. He had promised to walk her home, and he was a man of his word. Then he noticed a parasol in the purse. Mario grinned. *"Perfetta!"*

Mario, Pauline, and Donkey Kong in: The Great Ape Escape!
Chapter 3: Springing Forward, Falling Back

75 meters above the now bustling crowd, Pauline risked opening her eyes, and wished she hadn't. Donkey Kong carried her across a series of elevators, designed to carry construction workers up to the most recent floors, then hopped nimbly across a series of unfinished beams in disorganized rows. Donkey Kong set his wife down, trying to remember everything Granny Kong had told him about asking a girl out: "First, grab her and carry her back to your home!" He'd already nailed that part, but what was it Granny had said he was supposed to do with the girl once he got her home?

Of course! He remembered: "If she is good, be nice to her, and give her bananas. But if she is bad, spank her bottom until it is bright red. But only spank her when she really deserves it! Do that, and she'll love you forever and ever!" Granny Kong was so wise!

But how good did his wife have to be to get a banana? And how bad did she have to be to get a spanking? Granny Kong had never told him!

Donkey Kong clutched his skull. On the one hand, Pauline had said she wanted to be his wife. On the other hand, she had also been bratty and yelled mean things at him! To spank, or not to spank? That was the question!

In the end, Donkey Kong decided that he'd have to give his disobedient wife her first spanking sooner or later, so he might as well start right now. Also, spanking her bouncy bottom would be barrels of fun!

Aware that she was in imminent danger, but oblivious that her butt, in particular, was in even greater danger, Pauline tried to creep away and hide behind the first thing she saw: a set of

wooden spring boards. “Huh?” thought Pauline. “Why on earth does a construction crew have a bunch of spring boards this high up?”

That was a very astute question on Pauline’s part. Unfortunately, no one has yet learned the answer to this mystery. Perhaps the Popeye House-Builder-Uppers Construction crew liked to use them as trampolines while working, as a sort of middle finger to O.S.H.A. safety regulations.

Fortunately for Pauline, the sight of the wonderful springboards distracted Donkey Kong long enough for him to forget his plans to spank her.

“Oooooooo! Ooh-kay!” cood Donkey Kong with joy as he bounced experimentally on the wonderful jump-jump wood.

Then, as he reached the height of his bounce, Donkey Kong spotted Mario, riding the elevator up from below. At that moment, Donkey Kong’s head smacked into the ceiling, and after landing on his rump, he arose, hopping mad. The ape snatched up two of the spring boards, revealing the quivering, cowering frame of Pauline. Donkey Kong knew the bad man was hunting not only him, but also his poor, defenseless new wife!

Pauline realized the danger Mario was in, and fought her urge to freeze. “Mario! He’s armed with springboards!”

At the sound of the warning, Mario dove off the elevator an instant before a springboard smashed through the floor he was standing on, tangling the belt of the elevator and jamming it. Springs snapped, gears sprung. Mario’s fingers missed the edge of the nearest steel beam and he fell.

Tears sprang to Pauline’s eyes! “No! Don't die, Mario!”

Mario held Pauline’s parasol over his head and pressed the button on the handle. With a “Fwoof!” it opened, slowing his fall just enough to save him from breaking both his legs. Bellowing with rage, Donkey Kong hurled more springboards at his hated enemy.

“Krooloo, book-ook! Kong groo nu nu nookoo!” [Translation: “Curse you, bad man! Donkey Kong only wishes to be left alone!”]

Mario shielded his face and spun to avoid the first missile, but the second tore through his parasol, leaving only a broken handle. With a shrug, Mario threw it away and scaled the final ladder. Pauline cheered and ran to meet Mario.

Donkey Kong’s rage cooled, and he remembered the fear of being hunted. He had fought the bad men before, and they had put him to sleep with their magic boom boom sticks. His silly wife had no idea what danger she was in!

Pauline felt two hands clutch at her waist, and saw her feet kicking uselessly beneath her. As Donkey Kong began to scale the nearest ladder with his new wife in tow, one of her high heels went flying off her foot to the street below. “Mario! Please don’t fight this monster! I’m not worth dying for!”

“No! Your life matters! And I ain’t dying! I’m getting you home safe, and that’s that!” roared Mario, as he reached the base of their ladder.

But before Mario could catch up to them, Donkey Kong used the opposable-thumb-like toes of his feet to snap the ladder in two below him. Mario tottered, walking on the ladder like two stilts, before losing his balance. He went over the side, and with a “clack,” the remains of the wooden ladder followed him.

As she saw Mario swept away from her sight, Pauline’s mind reeled. She wanted to live. She wanted to die of embarrassment. She wanted to thank Mario, and help him anyway she could. She wanted to apologize to him. She wanted to slap him for being so stubborn and risking his life to save an idiot like her. She wanted to order him to leave her behind and save himself. She wanted to be strong and independent, and save herself. She wanted Mario to save her, then spank her until she cried like the spoiled, rotten brat she was. She wanted Mario to bring her home safe and sound to Mommy and Daddy, and then she wanted Mommy and Daddy to spank her all over again, for daring to risk her one and only life. And as she saw the crowded people swarming at the base of the tower, like itsy-bitty teeny-tiny ants, Pauline wanted to throw up.

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100 meters in the air, a blimp circled the rickety, unfinished peak of the future Trump Tower. Ken the Reporter, Diamond City’s finest canine anchorman, spoke soberly into his microphone. “Ladies and gentlemen, today, we bring you live footage of the sensational story that has gripped not only New York, but the entire nation. Daniella Pauline Verducci, one of New York’s most fashionable, most eligible bachelorettes, and long-time advocate for the rights and dignity of men, women, and animals, remains trapped in the hairy clutches of Donkey Kong, New York’s favorite gorilla. Only last week, this station reported how Ms. Verducci used the occasion of the opening ceremony at the Bronx Children’s Zoo to vocally protest the manner in which this magnificent creature was brought to New York, arguing that removing the great ape from its natural habitat was both destructive and cruel. Play the tape, Papa T.”

Papa T. snoozed at his audio mixing station, his magnificent yellow afro and headphones muffling all sound.

Ken barked, furious that the viewers at home might think he looked ridiculous. The news business was a dog-eat-dog world, and being a literal dog news reporter was tough enough as it was. “Papa T! We’re live!”

Papa T. started awake, and immediately intuited the correct button to press. Interview footage played on one of his monitors, and for the Diamond City News audience watching the broadcast from home. “So, Pauline, what you’re saying is: you hate all zoos. And since children love going to the zoo, that means you also hate all children?” asked the journalist, in a fair and balanced tone of voice.

Pauline shook her head. “Not at all. Many zoos do important work in both research and conservation. But the City of New York purchased Donkey Kong from a network of illegal poachers. He was not born in captivity. Donkey Kong should be returned to his native habitat, along with his family.”

The journalist hummed, with an air of understanding. “I see…so what you’re saying is: you hate all zoos, and hate all children?”

…

Fighting for breath, Pauline felt her vision clear, and she couldn’t help but admire the genius of the tower’s design, even though it was incomplete. The blue steel shimmered in sharp contrast to the red and gold tinted steel of the lower floors. Ladders connected six levels of the tower’s peak, and sturdy rivets held an ornate circular design in place at the center of the tower, across all 6 floors. When it was finished, Trump Tower would have a magnificent, giant skyroof, in a throwback to the Art Deco architectural style.

Donkey Kong set Pauline down on the ground, bonking her bouncy bottom against the blue steel with a soft bump. When Pauline saw Donkey Kong pointing at something, her eye fell on a rickety wooden platform before her. Of course, the planks had been left behind by the construction team as a quick way of accessing different parts of the intricate tower, completely unsecured. The “great big sky roof” design concept for the tower meant that falling here meant falling 100 meters straight to the concrete below, uninterrupted. She’d have time to finish an entire prayer for forgiveness before she went splat. Swooning, Pauline felt the world go black as she slipped into blissful unconsciousness…

Pauline awoke with a yelp as she felt Donkey Kong pinch her backside, sharply. This time, the gorilla pointed more urgently, waving his arms imploringly. “Gookee! Gigga oogoo, choop-choop!” [Translation: “Hurry! Get to safety, and be quick about it!”]

Something about the way Donkey Kong waved his arms reminded Pauline of playing charades. Then she remembered the Jane Goodall documentary about gorillas learning sign language. “Can you…understand me? You want me to cross the bridge?”

Unmistakably, Donkey Kong nodded.

Pauline was such an animal lover, not even the threat of death diminished the joy she felt at this discovery. She had been right all along! Donkey Kong was an intelligent ape. Maybe he could be reasoned with.

As Pauline considered the implications of how she was to go down in history as the first woman to successfully hold a conversation with a gorilla, she failed to pay attention to what Donkey Kong was trying to communicate to her.

The leader of the Kongs began to explain to Pauline why it was important for every good Kong-husband to protect his Kong-wife from bad hunters, even if his Kong-wife was a bit stupid and definitely needed a good spanking later, but that right now she needed to move her butt. Unfortunately, Pauline was never very good at charades.

She knew there was no way she was going across that plank. The time had come to stand up for herself. To prove to this beast, and to prove to herself, that she was not merely a weak, helpless woman! “No! Absolutely not!”

Donkey Kong furrowed his brow. Holding up his fist, he slapped it thrice, firmly, then pointed at Pauline, then pointed across the bridge.

“Now listen here, you male chauvinist pig-gorilla! I’m Pauline Verducci. My daddy taught me to never give in to bullies like you! I’m not your property, I’m not your slave, I’m a free, independent woman! So, I don’t have to do anything you tell me to do!”

Pauline put her hands on her hips, relishing in the moment. *“Yeah! I am woman! Hear me roar!”* she thought.

Then she noticed the stone-cold look on Donkey Kong’s face. “Uh, look, I probably shouldn’t have yelled at you. I’m sure you’ve been through–”

As Donkey Kong seated himself, grasped her by the waist and easily scooped her up, Pauline started found herself yammering, “–been through a lot lately, and I really shouldn’t be making things–”

Donkey Kong bent Pauline over his lap, and tugged curiously at her red skirt, not sure if it was a strange sort of tail.

"–worse! Making things *much* worse by taking my anger out on you. Maybe we can discuss this like rational–"

Deciding that it was not a tail, but only a red piece of cloth like his favorite necktie, Donkey Kong tore Pauline's skirt clean off with one sharp tug, then flicked away the torn remnants. Pauline eyed it fluttering away like a bird, taking her dignity with it. "–adults! *Rational* adults who are both old enough–"

Paulie glimpsed Donkey Kong raising his mighty left paw high above her bottom, and shut her eyes. The first spank landed with an echoing thunderclap across Pauline's "Daddy's Little Girl" panties. "Ow! Old enough to talk about our problems, using reason, rather than using spank–"

Donkey Kong aimed the second spank at Pauline's right butt cheek, but his palm was so large, it covered most of her left cheek anyway. "–spankings, which are violent and cruel and–"

The third spank was aimed at her left butt cheek, but again managed to cover most of her right cheek anyway.

Pauline was shocked by the size of the Gorilla's heavy hand. Donkey Kong, for his part, was impressed by the size of his new wife's big, beautiful bottom. He would have to work hard to spank it to the proper color: "Don't stop until it's as red as a baboon's backside!" Granny Kong had counseled him.

Pauline bit her lip, and struggled to complete her appeal to Donkey Kong's limited sense of reason and mercy. "–completely unnecessary! Given that we are both creatures capable of reason, that means we're both old enough to use our words, and too old–"

The third spank landed at the center of her bottom again, the gorilla's five splayed fingers leaving five red marks as thick as her waist. Pauline's voice started to crack as she hollered, "–Too old! Too old for spanking! So please, there's no need for–"

The fourth spank landed on Pauline's left cheek again. "–A spanking! So, puh-please–" but before she could form the conclusion of her argument, Donkey Kong landed the fifth spank more quickly on her right cheek, remembering his favorite jungle rhythms.

“No spankings! Please no spank–”

The sixth and seventh spank announced the start of the new, furious drum-beat rhythm. Pauline’s cries of Please’s and No’s quickly gave way to howls of pain. Pauline *hated* spankings, even run-of-the-mill spankings from her Mommy and Daddy, when they grew tired of spoiling her rotten. But, as Pauline was learning to her dismay, a traditional spanking for a naughty, stupid, disobedient Kong-wife was far, far worse.

…

From his dirigible, Ken the Reporter fussed over the cameraman’s shoulder, wanting everything to be perfect. “As you can see, Donkey Kong has scaled to the peak of Trump Tower! (Jimmy T! They’re out of focus! Get ‘em in frame!) It seems that Donkey Kong and Miss Verducci are having some sort of altercation. My God! She’s actually communicating with the beast, and now he’s–”

Jimmy T. the cameraman corrected the focus and zoomed in tight, just in time to catch the action as Donkey Kong bent Pauline over his lap and pulled at her skirt.

“Oh! The humanity!” wailed Ken the Reporter as he witnessed Donkey Kong tear away Pauline’s skirt and begin her spanking. “What a horrifying development! As you can see, Donkey Kong is now *spanking* Ms. Verducci furiously. I know many have said she’s needed one for a good while, but now that I see it, I can’t bear to watch! It’s too cruel! Too barbarous! (Jimmy, make sure you get every second of this!) Oh, how could poor Pauline’s predicament possibly get any more precarious? What painstaking, paddling punishment could be in store for her perfect, plump, perky, pretty lil’ patootie? What could the duplicitous, devious Donkey Kong have in store for her that’s worse than this? If you want to find out, don’t touch that dial, folks. We’ll be right back, after these messages from our sponsors!”

Mario, Pauline, and Donkey Kong in: The Great Ape Escape!
Chapter 4: The Perils of Pauline’s Posterior

Panicking, Pauline grit her teeth, concentrating on her memory of Mario’s courage. She didn’t know if he was alive or dead. But he wouldn’t want her to give up so easily! Donkey Kong landed the last spank, bringing the total number to 64. He grunted. Sure, watching his wife’s buns bounce and jiggle was even more fun than he ever imagined, but he also felt sorry for her. “Ook-keee?” [Translation: “Had enough?”]

Pauline tossed her hair dramatically. “Do your worst, jack-ass! I’ll never surrender!”

Donkey Kong sighed. Grasping Pauline around her dainty waist, he picked her up again, this time holding her upside-down. Pauline began hooraying with her heels, feeling her curly hair flop across her face. Her second high heel went flying off her foot, to join the other waiting for her on the street below “Hey! Didn’t you hear me? I said I’d never surrender!”

Donkey Kong found a single barrel and sat on it. He realized if the bad man attacked, he would quickly run out of ammunition. As a loving, alpha-male gorilla father, he had no choice but to get his silly Kong-wife under control, or she might get really hurt!

Pauline pressed her palms against the steel below her face to support her weight, then craned her neck, still under the assumption that because the spanking she had just gotten was the worst spanking she’d ever gotten in her entire life, that meant it had to be over and done with by now, right? Then she felt the torn remains of her red dress flop around her face, exposing the small of her back and her belly, all the way up to the underside of her red, frilly bra. (Pauline had dressed for all possible scenarios for her blind date with Mario tonight.)

Donkey Kong pulled Pauline into a wheelbarrow position, spreading her legs to either side of his waist. Using his dextrous, hand-like feet, Donkey Kong held his errant wife around her stomach, pinning her securely in place. He examined the strange red garment before him, and wondered what the strange markings: “Daddy’s Little Girl” could possibly mean? He guessed they were some kind of magic spell, to protect her naughty bun-buns from the spanking she so richly deserved. He tugged at the waistband of her panties, curiously.

Pauline’s flight or fight response activated. Unfortunately, she could neither fly, nor fight in her current position. Above her, she saw a blimp floating merrily in the sky, the logo for the Diamond City News department clearly emblazoned on the side. Below her, she could just make out the news coverage playing on the TV billboards. A live stream of her dangling across Donkey Kong’s lap was currently being broadcast in Time Square, not to mention every television across the United States of America, and beyond.

“...Please, don’t pull down my panties, Donkey Kong. Oh, please, not a bare bottom spanking! Anything but that!” All sass and bravado was gone from her voice. She had none left.

Donkey Kong paused his examination of his wife’s behind. He sensed that his wife’s attitude had already improved. Granny Kong always said this was the secret to a happy marriage. “Boo boo, Bum bum?” [Translation: “Does your butt hurt?”]

Pauline nodded, roughly guessing the correct meaning of the Gorilla's Kongish dialect. "Yes! Boo boo, bum bum!"

Donkey Kong gently patted her upturned bottom three times, then pointed to the shoddy wooden plank bridge. "Ookoo gunna ooboo, oomfee?" [Translation: "Are you gonna' obey, sweet cheeks?"]

Pauline clenched her fists, along with her butt cheeks. She understood perfectly. If she promised to obey, and crossed that bridge, the spanking would be over. But that meant surrendering.

On the other hand, if she refused, she knew that the spanking would begin all over again, possibly even worse than before, and probably on her bare bottom. The entire world would witness her shame, pain, and humiliation. Even if she survived, she'd be a laughing stock. And the torture would surely go on and on, until her spirit was broken. Then she'd be forced to cross that bridge anyway, having accomplished nothing. She knew one word from her could end this ordeal.

It was a choice between all that, and betraying herself. It was the hardest decision she ever made in her life. It was the easiest decision she ever made in her life.

"Do your worst. I'm not your slave. I'm not your toy. Sooner or later, Mario will come to rescue me."

Donkey Kong shrugged. "Zoot ooksook!" [Translation: "Suit yourself!"]

Pinching the strange red garment by the waistband on either side, Donkey Kong slowly tugged the panties down his wife's hips, enjoying the sight that greeted his eyes. That ass was all his, now! But to his confusion, the panties caught just below her butt cheeks. He yanked at them roughly, wondering if this was some magic spell. It didn't occur to him that putting his wife's long, slender legs in the spread-eagle position was now preventing her panties from sliding any further.

Pauline's face turned red and she bowed her head, not wanting to think about the news coverage. She remembered Mario's courage. If he could face this monster, she could too! (Though she wished she didn't have to face him in this *particular* direction.)

Satisfied that the magic cloth probably couldn't do much to protect his wife's bottom, Donkey Kong playfully clapped both of Pauline's bare butt cheeks with both hands, happy to have both his hands free to perform a proper Kong-style bongo beat. Pauline bucked as she

felt the clap, then settled demurely into position. She had asked for this. She deserved this. She only wished it was Mario giving it to her.

Donkey Kong landed the first real spanks, again using both his hands at once. The thunderclap echoed across New York City. Pauline roared, tears springing instantly to her eyes. There was no hope of toughing this out, but she had known that from the beginning. She accepted it.

The world sat in silence, glued to their televisions as Donkey Kong began to pound out a steady, hypnotic jungle beat on Pauline's buttocks. Her cries were almost musical, blending perfectly with the driving tempo of the disciplinary spanking/conga performance. But Pauline refused to beg or plead. She wept, then screamed, until she struggled to breathe between racking sobs. Her hair flew wildly in every direction, sticking to her tear-stained face. Her bare feet kicked and twisted in mid air. Her palms slapped and pulled against the smooth steel, before she clenched her fists until her knuckles turned white, beating uselessly against Donkey Kong's well-muscled legs. Finally, she gave up her vain struggle and went limp, dimly aware that her bottom had gone numb, the sting of each fresh slap now overwhelmed by the fire in her fanny. Nevertheless, she felt the impact of each clap ripple through her body, and heard the sounds as though they were the beat of a great drum, echoing from far away.

At that moment, she remembered the face of Mario, remembered how she'd treated him, and remembered what she wanted to say to him. Arching her back, she raised her head high and shouted for the world to hear. "I'm sorry! I'm so, so sorry! I was wrong! What I said to you was wrong! I acted like a spoiled, rotten brat! Please, forgive me!"

Donkey Kong heard the words, and felt pity, assuming they were meant for him. "Ooo-kee! Dere dere, dum dum. Tum tum bum bum dun dun." [Translation: "All right. There, there, silly. Spanking's all over.]

To Pauline's surprise, she found herself being cradled in Donkey Kong's lap. He patted her back and soothed her like a baby. Pauline felt her temper rise, before considering her situation more carefully. *"No, can't risk antagonizing him any further,"* she thought.

Donkey Kong stood his wife up, happy to have that unpleasant business over with. The fun had gone out of it long ago. Pointing to the bridge, Donkey Kong reiterated his command, expecting his now-censured wife to listen and obey, just like Ganny Kong promised him would happen. Instead, his wife shook her head. "I'm sorry, Donkey Kong. But I can't obey you. If I step on that bridge, I won't be able to keep from fainting. If you care about me at all, please, don't make me do this."

Donkey Kong buried his face in his palms, then roared why women had to make everything so difficult. Ganny Kong had been very clear: once the bottom was bright red, the spanking was over, and it was time to forgive and forget. But he'd done that, and it wasn't working! And he couldn't bring himself to spank his silly little wife anymore. Ganny Kong wouldn't want him to be cruel.

Donkey Kong held his hands up imploringly, begging Pauline to obey, before the bad man who was hunting them showed up.

Both turned at the sound of hammering. Mario's head popped up over the edge of the tower, spitting out the last of the nails he'd held in his teeth. Using all his mastery of carpentry, he had rebuilt the broken ladder by hand, with scraps of broken barrels, and scaled to the top of the tower.

"Pauline! Get away from that monster! Across that bridge, now!" bellowed both Mario and Donkey Kong, in their respective languages, both pointing at the rickety plank.

Tensing, Pauline stared at the plank. She didn't want to obey Donkey Kong, but now that Mario was here, the situation had changed. As long as she was with Donkey Kong, she was a liability. Pauline knew that there was nothing she could do to help Mario, other than obey. Feeling every hair on her body stand on end, Pauline forgot her terror of heights, and sprinted across the wooden plank, clutching her aching buttocks. The moment she reached the other side safely, it slipped and fell away. Spotting a ladder, Pauline leapt toward it and started climbing, realizing it led to the tippy-top of the arching tower that would crown the giant sky roof.

As Mario pulled out a sledgehammer and took a swing at Donkey Kong, who danced away with surprising agility, Pauline spotted something at their feet. A heavy rivet reverberated from the impact. It hadn't been welded down! Glancing below her, Pauline comprehended the architectural design. The central tower she was clinging to was connected to gothic-inspired flying buttresses, supporting the tower from outside. But the central platform Mario and Donkey Kong were using as their battleground was still being riveted to the building's skeletal framework. "Mario! The rivets! Knock out the rivets!"

Mario barely dodged a crushing blow from Donkey Kong, that sent tremors through the floor. Mario spotted one of the precariously attached rivets. "Huh? But what if break 'em, and the whole tower collapses? What if I hurt you?"

Pauline held up her hands, as if in prayer. "Trust me, Mario, it will work!"

That was all Mario needed to hear. Diving between Donkey Kong's legs, he targeted the rivets, pulling them out each in turn, while using his sledgehammer to stave off the gorilla's sound-barrier breaking punches. As Mario tugged at the last rivet, it caught fast in its rivet-set, snagging on his sleeve and holding him fast! He was helpless!

Donkey Kong narrowed his eyes, wondering why the bad man was after the metal teeth. They must be magic! Circling around his enemy at a distance, the King of the Kongs ran to the center of the platform. This little hunter was far too dangerous. He would have to grab his wife and run far away, where they would both be safe.

Mario tore his sleeve free, and snatched up his sledgehammer. He hesitated for only one moment, feeling sorry for the big lug, then slammed a perpendicular blow at the rivet, hoping to knock it loose.

It almost worked.

The last rivet nearly popped loose by an inch, its tip now the only thing holding the central platform in place. With a tremendous groan, the decorative structure buckled, sending Donkey Kong to his knees. The gorilla spun around, terrified, unable to find his invisible enemy.

All three of them, hero, heroine, and the hapless villain alike, shielded their ears as metal scraped against metal, and the central platform collapsed onto the matching decorative structure one floor below. Donkey looked down, and saw he was floating over nothingness. The gods had abandoned him! The earth was collapsing beneath his feet! Twisting in mid-air, Donkey Kong caught himself, breaking his fall, only for the ground to fall away beneath him all over again as the lower level of steel buckled under the weight of the upper level.

Pauline rubbed her smarting behind. Part of her didn't care if her would-be gorilla husband fell to his doom, but in her heart, she was still a conservationist. "Mario! Donkey Kong's not a bad gorilla! He's just lost and confused, and he needs help too!"

Not sure if he was being too soft-heated, Mario pulled a length of rope from his carpenter's belt and wound a sailor's knot around one of the sturdy flying buttress structures. "Hey, Donkey Kong, catch, ya' damn' dirty ape!"

Mario tossed the end of the rope toward Donkey Kong with his perfect fastball pitch.

Thinking only of Pauline, Mario leapt to the ladder and began to scale it.

The ape caught the rope, confused. Was this more magic? Then the floor collapsed again, and the ape held on for dear life. As he swung on the rope, he remembered his childhood, swinging from vine to vine in the jungles of Kong Island. Yes! He could conquer this strange, concrete-jungle land. And once he climbed up this rope, he would pound that evil little magic hunter hammer man until–

“Donkey Kong! Watch out for that–” shouted both Pauline and Mario, but too late!

Donkey Kong slammed flat into a steel beam then fell backwards, landing on his head with an echoing, “Gong!”

Mario and Pauline winced. “Do you think he’s dead?” asked Mario.

Pauline shook her head, breathing a sigh of relief that the rest of the structure had survived the collapse of the decorative central platform. She had been 99% sure that her plan would work. Now that they were finally safe, she realized how nerve-wracking that 1% doubt had been. “No, but I bet he’ll feel that in the morning.”

Mario spun Pauline around to examine her for injuries. He whistled. Sure enough, Pauline’s backside shone red, as bright as the top of the Chrysler building. “He ain’t the only one. You’re in rough shape. Can you walk?”

Pauline blushed and covered her bottom, twisting away to hide it from further inspection. “Oh? You…heard what happened?”

“I think all of New York heard it. I’m sorry, Pauline. I wish I could have gotten there sooner…uh, I found your purse.”

Relieved, Pauline accepted the purse and rifled through it, strangely comforted to have it back. She found the family locket her parents had given her as her graduation gift, then noticed what was missing. “My parasol? It’s gone!”

Mario felt sheepish. “Oh, I sorta used it as an emergency parachute, and it got messed up. Sorry about that.”

Pauline pretended to pout. “Hmph! Well, you’ll just have to buy me a new one, won’t you?”

Mario took off his hat. “Of course, Miss Verducci!”

Pauline instantly regretted her teasing. She'd hoped Mario would find her playful, bratty routine charming. Part of her wanted Mario to scold her and pull her across his lap for another spanking then and there. But at that moment, she realized that she couldn't expect Mario to read her mind. "Thank you, Mario. What you did was amazing! You came to my rescue, even after I was nasty to you."

With a smile, Mario put his hat back on, flicking the brim with a finger. "Oh, no big deal!"

Pauline crossed her arms. "Hold on, Mario. It *is* a big deal. To be honest, when I first met you, I looked down on you because of your appearance, your mannerisms, your work background…I see now how wrong I was. Men like you are the backbone of this country, and you deserve to be treated with respect and honor. I owe you an apology, and I won't feel right if I don't do it properly. Won't you forgive me?"

Deeply moved, Mario cleared his throat. "Well, in that case, apology accepted, Miss Verducci!"

"Please, call me Pauline. Now, on to my second point," Pauline folded her hands neatly in front of her, just like she did when giving a motivational speech to her fellow philanthropists. The effect was only heightened by the fact that she still looked like a complete professional while wearing the shredded remains of her red dress and cheeky underpants. "Getting abducted by Donkey Kong gave time to think. While he was beating me, all I could think about was how I deserved to be punished, but the only one who deserved to give me my spanking was you, Mario. I know you've forgiven me, but I think you've earned the right to paddle my rump. Before you escort me home, I'd like you to give me the spanking I've had coming, right here and now, please."

Mario's mustache drooped in shock. "But, Pauline, a gentleman should *never* hit a lady. And you're the classiest lady I know! I don't want to hurt you!"

Pauline nodded, then straightened her posture, towering over Mario. "I know that now, Mario, and I respect that. In fact, I love that about you. But I'm not asking you to *hit* me, I'm asking you to *spank* me. That's not the same thing at all!"

"Seem pretty similar to me! What's the difference?"

"Simple! You *hit* a person because you want to *hurt* them. But you *spank* a person because you want to *help* them."

"...Come again?"

Pauline sighed, and lost the professional speaker quality in her voice as she looked into Mario's eyes. "Look, when I was a little girl, Mommy and Daddy almost never gave me spankings, even when I probably deserved one. But the few times they *did* spank me, I always knew I deserved it, and then I tried to do better…for a little while. But years ago, they decided I was too old for spankings…and that was a mistake. For years, I've known I still deserve a spanking sometimes, but I've been too scared to ask them for one. Today, I put my life in danger, and your life as well, thanks to my stubborn attitude. Right now, I need to be spanked, for my own good."

Mario stroked his chin. "Well, why not talk to your Madre e Padre about how you feel?"

Pauline gulped and hung her head, dwelling on the poignant, painful memory of her last childhood spanking. "I will, Mario. At least…I'll try to. But I'm still scared of being spanked. What if I chicken out? Right now, and you're the only one I trust enough to ask for this. Please, Mario, as my friend, won't you help me face this?"

Seeing the urgency in his lady-friend's eyes, Mario knew she was serious. He had to admit he'd been annoyed with Pauline earlier, but she was clearly ready to take responsibility, and he had to respect that. "I'm not sure I understand, Pauline, but if you think giving you a *sculacciata* will help you learn from this experience, then I'll try my best to help you…on one condition!"

Pauline's head shot up, beaming. "Oh? Really, you will? Name the condition!"

Mario held up a finger. "Promise that if you decide you've been spanked enough, that you'll tell me to stop the spanking immediately."

Pauline pouted. "But how can it be a punishment if I'm the one who decides when it ends? I want this spanking to be for real!"

"Because you're an adult, and you're asking for this of your own free will. A few swats on the behind might be enough for a bratty kid, but you're a full grown woman. If I spank you, I'm giving you a proper spanking. And don't you worry, it *will be* for real! I expect you to be brave and take what's coming to you, but you also deserve to have a say when you've been punished enough."

Pauline nodded. "I see. I never thought of it that way before. If I can stop the spanking anytime, that means I have to be even braver, and accept every spank you give me. Okay! It's a deal!"

Mario held out his hand and they shook on it. "È un affare! …Uh, you want to get this taken care of right now, then?"

Mario rested on his knees at the center of the platform, patting his lap. Pauline nodded and settled herself onto his lap, as if he were Santa Claus and they were about to discuss why she had been put on the naughty list for Christmas this year. "Yes, thank you, Mario. I'd much prefer that. I can't stand to wait a moment longer. Oh, and Mario, it's normal for me to cry and fuss a bit during a proper spanking, so don't stop right away just because I start begging and pleading."

Mario looked up at her sternly, as if Pauline was a sneaky little trouble-maker, trying to wriggle out of their earlier deal. “Then how will I know when you need me to stop?”

Pauline beamed and pointed toward the sky. Dusk was settling, and the first star had appeared. “Simple, we’ll use a safe word. If I don’t think I can possibly take any more pain, I’ll shout the word…‘Superstar!’” The star above reflected in her eyes as she stared at it with wonder.

“But unless I shout the word ‘Superstar’, I don’t want you to stop the spanking, no matter what. I’m trusting you to decide when I’ve been punished enough. Now, please spank me, Mario. I’m ready.”

Lifting herself up, Pauline twisted around and deposited herself right back across Mario’s lap, obediently offering up her bottom. Mario patted her bottom experimentally and wrapped an arm around her waist. Pauline felt safe and secure, and lifted her hips slightly, wanting to offer Mario a wide open target.

Mario was a man of few words. Not wanting to lecture Pauline, or make her feel any more guilty, he decided that Pauline already knew why she was in this position, and to waste no time. He began to spank her at a slow, steady pace, using half his strength. On the one hand, he didn’t want to bruise Pauline, but on the other hand, he knew she needed this to be a real punishment.

Pauline hummed and whimpered, but lay still.

Sure enough, she found the lingering soreness from Donkey Kong’s brutal beat-down had left her tender. Their eyes met briefly, before Pauline stared ahead, shame-faced. Mario sensed that so far, Pauline thought of this spanking as only a warmup, and was nervously awaiting for the real thing to begin. Raising his arm high, Mario put more of his shoulder and wrist into the next set of spanks, slowing the pace slightly. He remembered learning how to throw a baseball from his Padre and found the motion was similar: controlled, but with follow through.

Pauline quickly noticed the difference. Her little sounds of mild discomfort became steadily more urgent, and her legs squirmed, her bare feet tapping lightly against the ground. The letters of the slogan, “Daddy’s Little Girl” seemed to writhe across the ample surface area of her ass.

For the first time since Donkey Kong had forced her to cry her eyes out, Pauline felt fresh tears welling up, and strained weakly against Mario’s grasp. “Oh no…please, Mario, no, no, no! Ow! Oh! Aha!” Mario hesitated for a fraction of a second, remembered Pauline’s earlier instructions, and carried on, delivering slower, even firmer spanks.

Pauline’s eyes flew open as she felt the first full-strength swat. By the second and the third blow, she had discerned the new pattern, and felt her resolve crumble. She knew before that Mario was strong. Now she felt it, and knew he wasn’t taking it easy on her. She *needed* to be spanked. She *wanted* to be spanked. But that didn’t make it hurt any less. She bucked as the

fourth spank landed, her legs kicking up and her head snapping up from the floor. “Ouch! It hurts!”

After the fifth spank, she bucked, trying to lift herself up and off Mario’s lap. “Yeouch! Yowl! Ooch! Stop it! Please stop, Mario! No more!”

Mario didn’t hesitate this time, pinning the bucking dame back in place, he continued to spank with the full strength of his arm, but slowly picked up the pace. He concentrated on the memory of how Pauline had foolishly put herself in danger in the first place, and blocked out her fussing and complaining. For the first time, he found himself fully agreeing with Pauline. He’d gone along with this before because he wanted to help her. But she had been right all along. She deserved this spanking, and now he was going to give it to her.

As he watched the ripples reverberating through Pauline’s lower butt-cheeks, Mario realized that although he had said he forgave Pauline before they began, he was really starting to forgive her now. With each spank, he felt her pain. He couldn’t stand to see her suffering, but he knew that, for her sake, she needed to endure this suffering.

Pauline screeched, before digging her perfectly manicured fingernails into her permed hairdo. This sucked! All her tough talk, and now look at her. She just wanted this spanking to be over already!

Then she remembered her safe word. All she had to do was say the word, and her ass would be safe. She *really* didn’t want to be spanked anymore! She wanted to be strong, dangerous, independent, and cool. She kicked so ferociously, she felt the heels of her feet bumping against her sit-spots, the tender area where her buttocks connected to her thighs. But Mario ignored her flailing and aimed the next few spanks at the sides of her cheeks.

With every single spank Pauline felt, her inner feminist wept, but why did it have to feel so damn right? The knowledge that she could easily stop this was somehow more tortuous than the physical pain could ever be. Biting her lip to avoid screaming her safe word, Pauline buried her face in her arms and let her tears fall freely. “I’m sorry Mario! I’m so, so sorry!”

She melted into a heap of girlishness, and her mind went blank. Seeing that Pauline was now making an effort to hold her legs in place, Mario decided to deliver the grand finale. He aimed another 100 spanks to the undersides of her cheeks, until the pale, hidden sit spots blushed to the same shade crimson as the rest of her bottom. Mario nodded, satisfied. The color matched her outfit perfectly! “I think you’ve been punished more than enough for one day, Pauline.”

Pauline nodded, pressing her lips against the cold steel, her mind starting to clear as if she had just awakened from a deep sleep. “Aren’t you going to bare my bottom?”

Mario shook his head, and sat Pauline on his lap. “No, you’ve been through enough. It took guts to ask for that after the drubbing Donkey Kong gave you. Sure, you deserved the spanking, but you don’t deserve to be degraded.”

She winced as her bright red bottom pressed against the denim of Mario’s bright red overalls. Then she settled into place, wrapped her arms around his neck, and nuzzled against him, before she hiccuped. Both of them giggled at the sound. “Well, I figured everyone already saw me get my bare butt blistered anyway, thanks to the news cameras. But I’ve definitely had enough for one day. You’re my ‘Superstar’!”

Mario scrunched his face. “Cameras? What cameras?”

Pauline pointed to the heavens, and Mario finally spotted the Diamond City News dirigible. Emblazoned on the side of the blimp was a giant screen, televising footage of the kidnapping and Pauline’s rescue, captioned by a chyron: “New York Heiress Kidnapped and Spanked by Gorilla, Rescued, Then Spanked Again! Who is the Mysterious Jumpman? News at 11!”

Mario’s eyes went wide when the newscast cut to Donkey Kong spanking Pauline, then his battle with Donkey Kong, then Mario spanking Pauline again. “…Oh.”

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Ever a gentleman, Mario wished to spare Pauline any further embarrassment after her difficult day. He pulled a spare set of red overalls out of his carpenter’s tool bag, and Pauline pulled off the look like a supermodel. “You know, I never thought overalls could be so stylish! Oh, look! They match the rest of my outfit!”

They were greeted by a cheering, adoring crowd. Fortunately, the elderly couple Pauline had spotted earlier had actually waited for them, wanting to return Pauline’s lost hat and high heels they’d found on their afternoon stroll through the neighborhood. Not so fortunately, the paparazzi fought tooth and nail to be the first to interview the couple. But Mario shoved them aside without taking questions, and led the exhausted Pauline safely back to the Verducci Family Manor in the Upper East Side.

Mario held his hat, and spun it in his hands. “Well, this is your stop! Tell your Dad I’m sorry we missed your curfew!”

Pauline still felt a bit dazed. Everything since their “friendly chat” at the top of Trump Tower had passed by her in a blur. “Oh, already? Thank you, Mario. This date has certainly been…most memorable! I’d love to chat, but after everything that happened,I really need my beauty sleep tonight.”

Mario nodded, put his hat back on, and excused himself with a curt bow. “You bet! Good night, Pauline!”

Pauline waved goodbye, watched Mario walk away until he reached the gate to their driveway, then spun through the front door. She buried her blushing face in her hands as she rested her back against the wall of the entrance foyer, and slumped to the floor.

Then she heard Daddy calling from the living room as he rushed to the front door. “Pauline, baby? Is that you?”

Mommy followed in his footsteps, her sheer delight interrupted only by the sight of Pauline’s red overalls. “We watched the whole thing happen on television. Daddy had the Police Comissioner on the phone all evening. We’re so happy you're safe! …What on earth are you wearing? Is that a new French line?”

Pauline leapt to her feet and dived into their arms, exchanging hugs and kisses. “Mommy! Daddy! I’m so glad to be home!”

Daddy pulled back from their embrace to fix his daughter with a firm stare. “What were you thinking? You practically threw yourself into the arms of that monster!”

Pauline hung her head. “That’s the problem: I wasn’t thinking! But ever since I saw Mario coming to rescue me, I’ve been doing a lot of thinking about how I need to be doing a lot more thinking!”

Mama ruffled her one and only daughter’s hair. “Well, I’m just glad this nightmare is over!”

Pauline shook her head, before looking up into her Daddy’s eyes. “No, Mommy, it’s not over. I acted like a silly, spoiled air-head today. I’ve got to learn to start using my brain, and start holding myself more accountable.”

Daddy harrumphed, in that particular way upper-scale New Englanders like to mix a grunt and a hum. “Hrmm! You certainly do! If you were just a little younger, I’d spank you for acting so silly.”

Pauline folded her hands, back in professional business women mode. “You are half correct, Daddy. I most certainly *do* deserve a spanking, but it doesn’t follow logically that I shouldn’t get one, just because I’m grown up now. When I turned twelve, you and Mommy once told me I had outgrown spankings, but I’m afraid I disagree. I think you need to start spanking me again, to remind me to be the best possible version of myself!”

Daddy swooned and fainted into Mommy’s arms. Horrified, Mommy hid her eyes behind her forearm, while holding her rich and powerful husband in her other arm. “Spank our only child? Oh no! I can’t bear the thought of seeing my baby suffering! Though, I admit I was tempted to give you a good spanking every time I watched them replay the footage of you happily volunteering to be kidnapped, but it’s simply too barbaric! Too cruel!”

Daddy's eyes fluttered open and he stumbled to his feet, grasping his wife's hand urgently in his. "No, my love! Polly is absolutely right! It was our duty to teach and prepare our daughter to face the world, and instead we spoiled her! Pauline, from now on, if you think you need a spanking to help teach you to do better, your Mommy and I are prepared to spank you, starting right now!"

Daddy pointed to the grandfather clock, which indicated it was 8 o'clock. "Pauline, you were late home again, after curfew! I've promised you a spanking for staying out late countless times in the past, and now it's time for me to keep my promise. Meet me in my study. I'm going to give you a good spanking before bed!"

This time, it was Mommy's turn to swoon and faint into Daddy's arms. "Oh no! Already? I can't bear it…"

Then Mommy's eyes popped open, wide awake, and she looked at her husband urgently, while still held in his arms. "Wait, that's not fair, Hubby-wubby. Pauline was only late because that great, hairy, grubby-looking fellow took his sweet time getting her home. Really, Pauline, I think you could do much better than him. Did you happen to get the number of that dashing Jumpman character from the television?"

Wondering whether her Mommy was confusing Mario with Donkey Kong, Pauline shook her head. "Not now, Mommy! And Daddy is absolutely right. Sure, I was late getting home because I was being held hostage, but it was my own fault that happened. Therefore, by the principle of transitive relation, it is my own fault that I missed curfew. I certainly deserve a spanking for that!"

Mommy shot to her feet, and held Pauline's hands. "Oh, you're so persuasive, Polly!"

Daddy opened the door to his magnificent study in the adjacent room, and gestured to invite Pauline in to face her doom. "Then let's not put this off. March, Pauline! Mother, be a dear and fetch a pair of leather slippers for us."

As Pauline marched into her father's study, she overheard Mommy swooning and catching herself on the handrail of the grand staircase, before suddenly shooting her head up again, perfectly awake. "Oh, Father, please don't be too hard on poor, precious Pauline…I'm taking a crack at her after you're through."

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Outside, Mario shuffled his feet, taking his time as he marched down the Manor's impressive, white stone driveway. He'd wanted to ask Pauline out for a second date, but after such a chaotic night, it didn't seem like the right time. After all, just because they were friends now didn't mean a gal like her would consider a guy like him to be in her league.

At the iron gate that marked the boundary of the Verducci family property, Mario heard a series of sharp smacking sounds and turned his head. The lights were on in a grand room on the first floor, right next to the front entrance. A magnificent set of arched double-windows, left ajar to keep the house cool at night during the hot summer, gave a full view into a study lined with bookshelves. Framed at the center of the window, Pauline's daddy had seated himself in a straight-backed wooden chair, with his back facing away from the front lawn. Pauline lay dangling across his lap, while her panties lay dangling below her knees, as her father delivered a firm hand spanking to her upturned bottom. Pauline kicked, her panties stretching as they caught on her ankles, before she resolutely held herself in place, accepting the swats with an air of quiet dignity. Pauline's mother arrived in the study carrying two slippers. The last thing Mario saw was Pauline obediently standing up and bending over the wooden desk, presenting a full view of her full moon to the window, before her Mommy and Daddy stood at either side of her, each holding a leather slipper high.

Not wanting to intrude any further, Mario smiled, and turned away. "Well, she certainly isn't spoiled!"

As he made his way out the gate, he heard the unmistakable sound of two sturdy leather slippers smacking across two sturdy butt cheeks. As Mario strolled away, the sound of the furious spanking echoed in his ears, gradually fading away in the distance, with no sign of it stopping any time soon. Mario whistled a jazzy tune as he made his way back home to Brooklyn.

[End of Chapter 4]